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Current Discipline Procedures Used in Southern Illinois High Schools

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Current Discipline Procedures Used in
Southern Illinois High Schools

by
Les Oyler

FIELD EXPERIENCE

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

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CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1998

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS FIELD EXPERIENCE BE ACCEPTED AS
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Abstract

Class disruptions caused by unwanted student behavior account for lost instruction time and reduce the amount of learning that can take place within the school setting. There were three purposes of this study. The first purpose was to determine how detentions and suspensions were used to discourage disruptive and unwanted student behavior by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline. A second purpose of the study was to determine the extent of satisfaction of southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline with current discipline procedures being used. The third purpose of the study was to identify discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions that southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline perceived as successful in changing unwanted student behavior.

A survey instrument was designed by the author to retrieve information concerning the types and methods of discipline used to reduce unwanted student behavior. Southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline were asked to respond to questions concerning detentions, suspensions, length of time a student must serve, when these consequences must be served and who monitors these consequences. Respondents were also given adequate space to enter information about discipline procedures

other than detentions and suspensions they were using which had been successful in discouraging unwanted student behavior in their schools.

Ninety-eight percent of responding southern Illinois administrators reported using detention as a consequence for unwanted student behavior. A teacher was usually hired to monitor those students who received detentions. A majority of the schools required students to stay before or after school for a period of 30 minutes. If a Saturday detention was required, the student was typically there for a period of three and a half or four hours.

Eighty percent of responding southern Illinois high school administrators reported that they believed detentions discouraged unwanted student behavior. Most of the respondents also indicated that changes in detention procedures had been made during their tenures as administrators.

All responding southern Illinois high school administrators reported using suspensions to control student behavior. Seventy-four percent of those administrators used both in-school and out-of-school suspensions to discipline students. Eighty-eight percent of the administrators indicated a belief that suspensions did discourage unwanted student behavior. Schools were about evenly divided on individuals responsible for monitoring in-school suspensions among an administrator, a faculty member and a

teacher aide.

Sixty-seven percent of the responding administrators indicated they had made changes in their school's discipline procedures. The three most reported changes were:

1. Curricula - Some schools had developed more "hands on" curricula for the purpose of increasing student interest.

2. Saturday detentions - Some schools had established the use of Saturday detentions for students who exhibited unwanted behavior.

3. Establishment of point systems - Some schools had established point systems by which students received points each time they misbehaved. The more serious the offenses, the more points the students were given. A running total was kept for each student. Several minor offenses would result in a major consequence.

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Chapter 1

Overview

Background

Controlling unwanted or disruptive student behavior seems to be a problem that is common to all school districts. These disruptions limit the amount of learning that can take place by reducing the amount of time students spend on task. The more time students are able to remain on task, the more apt they are to comprehend and learn material that is presented. By reducing unwanted student behavior, school personnel become better able to meet the educational needs of their students. To control unwanted student behavior, many schools have established discipline procedures and consequences of student misbehavior.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed by this study was: What types of disciplinary procedures are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline using to control unwanted student behavior?

The study provided southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline the opportunity to provide information about their discipline procedures and to assess their effectiveness. By examining the methods and the strategies used most often by high school administrators to discourage

unwanted student behavior, school district officials should become better able to provide a school climate that is more conducive to learning.

It was anticipated that this study would provide useful data to southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline who were currently dissatisfied with school discipline procedures. These administrators would have the opportunity to review the procedures used most often by other area administrators for the purpose of reducing unwanted student behavior.

Purposes of the Study

There were three purposes of this study. The first purpose was to determine how detentions and suspensions were used to discourage disruptive and unwanted student behavior by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline. A second purpose of the study was to determine the extent of satisfaction of southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline with current discipline procedures being used. The third purpose of the study was to identify discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions that southern Illinois administrators responsible for student discipline perceived as being successful in changing unwanted student behavior.

In order to accomplish the purposes of this study, a survey

instrument was developed by the author. It was field tested with a small group of southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline. Necessary changes were made in the survey instrument to correct problem areas before releasing it to the sample population.

Randomly selected administrators in charge of student discipline for high schools of various sizes within Administrative Division 7 of the Illinois High School Association in southern Illinois were asked to complete a survey (see Appendix A) pertaining to the methods and procedures they used to discipline students who exhibit unwanted behavior. The survey was designed to yield information concerning the most popular types and methods of discipline used by area schools to combat disruptive student behavior.

Research Questions

The specific research questions addressed by this study follow:

1. To what extent do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline use detentions as a form of consequences?
2. Who monitors the detentions?
3. When are detentions served?
4. What is the length of time a student must serve?
5. To what extent has the amount of time students serve in

detention discouraged unwanted student behavior?

6. To what extent have detention procedures been changed during the tenures of southern Illinois High school administrators responsible for student discipline?

7. To what extent have the change(s) made in detention procedures made a difference in student behavior as perceived by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline?

8. To what extent are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline using suspensions to discourage unwanted student behavior?

9. What types of suspensions are being used by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline?

10. To what extent do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe that suspensions have discouraged unwanted student behavior?

11. Who monitors in-school suspensions in southern Illinois high schools?

12. If out-of-school suspensions are given, what percent of parents do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe would issue additional punishment to their children?

13. To what extent are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline satisfied with current discipline procedures?

14. What discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe have been successful?

Limitation

The study was limited to high schools in southern Illinois (Administrative Division 7 of the Illinois High School Association).

Delimitation

It is important to note that this study did not include the discipline of special education students. The disciplinary procedures used with this special population involve issues that are quite different from those involved in disciplining regular education students. Information concerning these students was outside the scope of this study.

Definitions of Terms

Detention. A method used by individual school districts for the purpose of punishing disruptive or unwanted student behavior. Detentions are usually served before or after school or on Saturday with the length of time varying from just a few minutes to several hours.

Procedures. The formal structures by which school policies

are to be carried out.

School Discipline. The procedures carried out by administrators in charge of discipline for the purpose of changing or punishing unwanted or disruptive student behavior.

Suspension. A process in which the student whose behavior has been unwanted is separated from the rest of the student body. An out-of-school suspension occurs when the student is sent home, while an in-school suspension occurs when the student remains at school, but is separated from the rest of the student body and supervised by an adult.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature and Research

During most of its 27 year existence, the Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools has identified lack of discipline as the most serious problem facing the nation's educational system (Zirkel & Gluckman, 1991).

According to the Harvard Education Letter which was published in a report by Cotton and Wikelund (1990), each month approximately 3% of the teachers and students in urban schools, and 1% to 2% in rural schools, are robbed or physically attacked. Nearly 17,000 students per month experience physical injuries serious enough to require medical attention.

Zirkel and Gluckman (1991) have indicated that classroom disruptions lead to nearly two million suspensions per year. Approximately one-half of all classroom time is used with activities other than teacher-pupil instruction, and discipline problems account for a significant portion of this lost instructional time (Georgiady, Sinclair, & Sinclair, 1991).

Should discipline be concerned with preventing misconduct or with punishing it? According to Zirkel and Gluckman (1991), discipline refers to both prevention and remediation. It can also be the training that is expected to produce a desired pattern of behavior or a way of controlling behavior which is a result of such

training.

The discipline problems faced by public school teachers today have changed from what they were 50 years ago. Public school teachers were asked to rate their top disciplinary problems. A list from the Congressional Quarterly Researcher published in an article by Short (1993) identified a comparison of the top disciplinary problems during the 1940s and those chosen during the 1990s. That comparison list follows:

1940s	1990s
talking out of turn	drug abuse
chewing gum	alcohol abuse
making noise	pregnancy
running in the halls	suicide
cutting in line	rape
dress code violations	robbery
littering	assault

When comparing the two lists, it is apparent that the problems faced by school districts of the 1990s are much more severe than those of the 1940s. Yet the resources schools now have available to discipline students who exhibit disruptive behavior are much more limited, restricted, and prohibitive (Smith, 1992).

Schools are vastly different today than they were just a few years ago, much less a generation ago. A number of today's parents

seem to have far less influence over today's students and far less interest in their conduct at school (Gorden, 1995).

In many cases when it does become necessary for an administrator or a teacher to discipline a student, parents have objected to the punishment imposed by the school. In some cases parents have even looked to the courts for relief from what they believe are unjust and unwanted disciplinary actions (Lawrence & Olvey, 1994).

Adults, especially older adults, tend to remember schools the way they were when they were students. They tend to believe that teachers should be able to control and discipline students like they were controlled and disciplined when they were in school (Watson & Rangel, 1996). This belief in an authoritarian form of discipline for controlling unwanted student behavior is assumed to have the backing of the parents. Sadly enough, this is not the case (Lawrence & Olvey, 1994).

According to Watson and Rangel (1996), if students are allowed to test the limits of school administrators and teachers every time they get a chance, school morale will soon start to drop and student achievement will begin to decline. When students know their disruptive behavior will not result in a strong consequence or the discipline issued is not consistent each time the same offense is committed, they are likely to continue with their disruptive

behavior. The school must then develop discipline procedures that define specific sets of consequences, or punishments for the same offenses (Tipton, 1995).

As indicated by MacNaughton and Johns (1991), it may seem as if everyone has a solution for the student who misbehaves. The difficulty is that there are no simple solutions or formulas when it comes to school discipline. There are, however, specific legal restrictions concerning the type of disciplinary measures that may be taken in a school setting.

The School Code of Illinois requires that certified employees are to maintain discipline within the schools (Illinois Association of School Boards, 1996). The School Code, however, does not specifically provide the ways or the means of fulfilling this mandate. Nevertheless, it does list certain measures that may not be used by the school in order to maintain discipline.

With the recent changes in the state laws regarding the rules and regulations governing how schools are able to discipline students who misbehave, schools are now limited in what corrective measures they may use for students who have exhibited unwanted behavior (Watson & Rangel, 1996). No longer are Illinois school officials permitted to use corporal punishment or physical measures as a form of disciplining students (Gorden, 1995).

School officials have been forced to modify their discipline

procedures to comply with these recent changes in state law.

School districts have now established new discipline procedures that reflect these changes (Armstrong, 1995).

How can schools decrease disruptive student behavior? First, rules and the consequences for breaking them should be clearly specified and communicated to all by any and all means that the school has available, e.g., newsletters, student assemblies, and handbooks (Georgiady, Sinclair, & Sinclair, 1991). Meyers and Pawlas (1994) have recommended that the school should periodically restate these rules, especially after students have returned from summer or winter vacations.

Georgiady, Sinclair and Sinclair (1991) have simply stated discipline as “the business of enforcing classroom rules that facilitate learning and minimize disruption” (p. 50). They have found consequences to be an effective method of improving the school environment. Consequences can sometimes be too light or even unintentionally reinforcing to students. Some of the effectively used consequences include depriving students of privileges, mobility, or the company of friends.

In order for a school district to develop an effective discipline policy, the school must have a detailed outline of its discipline procedures that can clearly be understood by students, teachers, administrators and parents. How this plan is developed, written, and

enforced is extremely important (Tipton, 1995). Through proper implementation of the school's discipline procedures, school officials should become better able to ensure the quality of the educational environment (Kessler,1993).

Chapter 3

Design of the Study

General Design of the Study

In this study the author sought to identify specific discipline procedures used by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline to control unwanted student behavior.

There were three purposes of this study. The first purpose was to determine how detentions and suspensions were used to discourage disruptive and unwanted student behavior by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline. A second purpose of the study was to determine the extent of satisfaction of southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline with current discipline procedures being used. The third purpose of the study was to identify discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions that southern Illinois administrators responsible for student discipline perceived as being successful in changing unwanted student behavior.

The research questions and the items on the survey document (see Appendix A) that address these questions follow:

1. To what extent do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline use detentions as

a form of consequences? (Part II, question 1)

2. Who monitors the detentions? (Part II, question 2)

3. When are detentions served? (Part II, question 3)

4. What is the length of time a student must serve? (Part II, question 3)

5. To what extent has the amount of time students serve in detention discouraged unwanted student behavior? (Part II, question 4)

6. To what extent have detention procedures been changed during the tenures of southern Illinois High school administrators responsible for student discipline? (Part II, question 5)

7. To what extent have the change(s) made in detention procedures made a difference in student behavior as perceived by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline? (Part II, question 6)

8. To what extent are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline using suspensions to discourage unwanted student behavior? (Part III, question 1)

9. What types of suspensions are being used by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline? (Part III, question 2)

10. To what extent do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe that

suspensions have discouraged unwanted student behavior? (Part III, question 3)

11. Who monitors in-school suspensions in southern Illinois high schools? (Part III, question 4)

12. If out-of-school suspensions are given, what percent of parents do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe would issue additional punishment to their children? (Part III, question 5)

13. To what extent are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline satisfied with current discipline procedures? (Part IV, question 1)

14. What discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe have been successful? (Part IV, question 2)

Sample and Population

Southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline were asked to respond to the survey.

Of the 124 high schools located within Administrative Division 7 of the Illinois High School Association, (southern Illinois), 100 administrators were randomly selected to participate in the study.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

The survey instrument was designed by the author to retrieve a

variety of information concerning the types and methods of discipline used to reduce unwanted student behavior. Respondents were also given adequate space to enter information about discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions they were using which had been successful in discouraging unwanted student behavior in their schools. The validity of the survey came from personal experience and from information obtained through the research of literature.

During the time frame of this study, southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline were asked to respond to a survey related to the discipline of students in their schools. After a random sample of high schools was chosen, the survey (see Appendix A) and a cover letter (see Appendix B) were sent to each school along with a self-addressed stamped envelope. Each administrator responsible for student discipline was asked to provide the following demographic information (Part I: Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the Survey of Current Discipline Procedures):

1. District position.
2. Number of years as an administrator.
3. Type of school setting (urban, suburban, or rural).
4. School enrollment.

The following data were collected using the Survey of Current Discipline Procedures (see Appendix A) to measure the perceptions

of administrators in southern Illinois high schools who are responsible for student discipline to each of the corresponding research questions.

1. The use of detentions as a form of consequences, the individual responsible for monitoring those students, and the length of time the students must serve (Part II: Questions 1, 2, and 3 of the Survey of Current Discipline Procedures)

2. The use of suspensions, what type of suspensions are used, and who is responsible for monitoring students who receive in school suspensions (Part III: Questions 1, 2, and 4 of the Survey of Current Discipline Procedures)

3. Current discipline procedures besides detentions and suspensions which are used (Part IV: Question 2 of the Survey of Current Discipline Procedures)

Data Analysis

All data collected through the survey instrument were tabulated. Tables were used to identified the numbers and percentages of answers given by the respondents. Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole percents.

Chapter 4

Results of the Study

Overview

There were three purposes of this study. The first purpose was to determine how detentions and suspensions were used to discourage disruptive and unwanted student behavior by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline. A second purpose of the study was to determine the extent of satisfaction of southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline with current discipline procedures being used. The third purpose of the study was to identify discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions that southern Illinois administrators responsible for student discipline perceived as being successful in changing unwanted student behavior.

The specific research questions addressed by this study follow:

1. To what extent do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline use detentions as a form of consequences?
2. Who monitors the detentions?
3. When are detentions served?
4. What is the length of time a student must serve?

5. To what extent has the amount of time students serve in detention discouraged unwanted student behavior?
6. To what extent have detention procedures been changed during the tenures of southern Illinois High school administrators responsible for student discipline?
7. To what extent have the change(s) made in detention procedures made a difference in student behavior as perceived by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline?
8. To what extent are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline using suspensions to discourage unwanted student behavior?
9. What types of suspensions are being used by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline?
10. To what extent do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe that suspensions have discouraged unwanted student behavior?
11. Who monitors in-school suspensions in southern Illinois high schools?
12. If out-of-school suspensions are given, what percent of parents do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe would issue additional punishment to

their children?

13. To what extent are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline satisfied with current discipline procedures?

14. What discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe have been successful?

Survey Instrument

The survey was divided into four parts which consisted of questions regarding demographics, detentions, suspensions, and additional information. Each area consisted of several questions pertaining to that section.

Surveys Returned

Eighty-six of the 100 randomly selected high school administrators responsible for student discipline provided answers to the survey questions. This represented a response rate of 86%.

Demographic Results

Results for Survey Item 1. (District Position)

As indicated in Table 1, 56% of the surveys were completed by the high school principal, 35% by the assistant principal, and 8% were completed by a dean of students.

Results for Survey Item 2. (Years as an administrator)

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they

had served as administrators. As indicated in Table 2, 64% of the responding administrators had 5 or fewer years of experience, 14% had 6 - 10 years of experience, 19% had 11 - 20 years of experience and only 3% of the respondents had 21 or more years of experience as administrators.

Table 1

Administrators Responding to the Survey

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Principal	48	56%
Assistant Principal	30	35%
Dean of Students	8	9%

Table 2

Years of Administrative Experience of Survey Respondents

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
5 or fewer Years	55	64%
6 - 10 Years	12	14%
11 - 20 Years	16	19%
21 + Years	3	3%

Results for Survey Item 3. (Type of school setting)

District representatives were also asked to respond to a question concerning whether their school district setting was urban, suburban, or rural. As indicated in Table 3, most of the responses (73%) came from schools located in rural areas; 19% of respondents indicated that the locations of their schools were suburban settings, and only 8% indicated their schools were located in urban areas.

Table 3

Type of School Settings of Respondent Administrators

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Rural	63	73%
Suburban	16	19%
Urban	7	8%

Results for Survey Item 4. (School enrollment)

As revealed in Table 4, 29% of the respondents came from high schools with a student enrollment of three hundred or less, 38% with a student enrollment between 301 - 600, 19% with a student enrollment between 601 - 900, and 14% with student enrollments of over 900.

Research Question Results

Results for Research Question 1. (To what extent do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline use detentions as a form of consequences?)

In the survey administrators responsible for student discipline

Table 4

Student Enrollments in Schools of Respondent Administrators

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
300 or Fewer Students	25	29%
301 - 600 Students	33	38%
601 - 900 Students	16	19%
900 + Students	12	14%

were asked to answer several questions concerning detentions. The first question was if their school currently used detentions as a form of consequences to reduce unwanted student behavior. As shown in Table 5, 98% of the responding administrators indicated that their schools did use detentions as a form of consequences for disruptive student behavior. Only 2% of the surveys returned indicated that the school did not use detentions as a form of consequences.

Results for Research Question 2. (Who monitors the

detentions?)

As revealed in Table 6, 27% of the respondents indicated that a teacher was hired to monitor students who were issued detentions.

Twenty three percent indicated that the teacher who issued the

Table 5

Student Detentions

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Schools That Use Detentions	84	98%
Schools That Do Not Use Detentions	2	2%

detention was responsible for monitoring the student, 18% indicated that teachers were required to monitor detentions on a rotating basis, 18% indicated that a district administrator was responsible for monitoring the detention, and 14% of the respondents indicated that a teacher's aide was hired to monitor detentions.

Results for Research Question 3. (When are detentions served?)

As indicated in Table 7, 63% of the schools using detentions provided time before or after school for students to serve their detentions, 20% of the responding schools indicated they had established Saturday detentions, and 17% restricted the amount of

Table 6

Person Monitoring Detentions

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Teacher is Hired	23	27%
Issuing Teacher	19	23%
Teachers Rotate	15	18%
Administrator	15	18%
Teacher's Aide	12	14%

time their students had for lunch by requiring detentions to be served during part of their lunch periods.

Table 7

When Detentions are Served

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Before or After School	67	63%
Saturday	21	20%
Lunch	18	17%

Results for Research Question 4. (What is the length of time a student must serve?)

The amount of time a student was required to serve in detentions was split into two categories: the length of time required for weekday detentions and the length of time required for Saturday detentions. As shown in Table 8, the length of time a student was required to stay when serving a weekday detention varied from as little as 20 minutes to as much as 60 minutes. Four percent of the respondents indicated that their school required students to stay for just 20 minutes, 52% set 30 minutes as the amount of time required to serve a detention, 10% had established a detention time of 45 minutes and 34% were requiring students to stay for 60 minutes.

Table 8

Length of Time of Weekday Detentions

Trend Analysis of Responses	Number	Percentage
20 Minutes	3	4%
30 Minutes	36	52%
45 Minutes	7	10%
60 Minutes	24	34%

As indicated in Table 9, the length of time for Saturday detentions was split into two categories. Forty three percent of schools had established one and a half to two hours as the amount of

time a student must serve on Saturday, while 57% of the respondent schools had established three and a half to four hours as the amount of time the student was required to stay.

Results for Research Question 5. (To what extent has the

Table 9

Length of Time for Saturday Detentions

Trend Analysis of Responses	Number	Percentage
1 1/2 to 2 Hours	9	43%
3 1/2 to 4 Hours	12	57%

amount of time students serve in detentions discouraged unwanted student behavior?)

Respondents were asked if they believed detentions were a factor in reducing unwanted student behavior. As indicated in Table 10, 80% said detentions did help reduce unwanted student behavior while 20% believed that detentions had no effect on student behavior.

Results for Research Question 6. (To what extent have detention procedures been changed during the tenures of southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline?)

Respondents were asked if changes had been made in detention procedures during their times as administrators. As shown in Table 11, 60% of the respondents indicated that changes had been made in detention procedures, while 40% said no changes had been made.

Table 10

To What Extent Detentions Discourage Unwanted Student Behavior

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Administrators who believe detentions discourage unwanted behavior	68	80%
Administrators who believe detentions do not discourage unwanted behavior	18	20%

Table 11

Administrators Who Reported Changes in Detention Procedures During Their Tenure as Administrators

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Yes	52	60%
No	34	40%

Results for Research Question 7. (To what extent have the

change(s) in detention procedures made a difference in student behavior as perceived by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline?)

Respondents were asked if the changes made in their discipline procedures had a positive effect on reducing unwanted student behavior. Fifty two respondents indicated that changes had been made in their school's detention procedures during their tenures as administrators. As shown in Table 12, 90% of these respondents believed that the changes made in school detention procedures had a positive effect on reducing unwanted student behavior. Ten percent of the administrators responding believed the changes had no effect on student behavior.

Table 12

To What Extent Changes in Detention Procedures Discouraged
Unwanted Student Behavior

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Yes	47	90%
No Effect	5	10%

Results for Research Question 8. (To what extent are
Southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student

discipline using suspensions to discourage unwanted student behavior?)

As shown in Table 13, 100% of the respondent administrators indicated that their school used suspensions as a consequence for students who exhibited severe disruptive behavior.

Table 13

To What Extent Suspensions Are Used to Discourage Unwanted Student Behavior

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Schools That Use Suspensions	86	100%
Schools That Do Not Use Suspensions	0	0%

Results for Research Question 9. (What types of suspensions are being used by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline?)

As indicated in Table 14, 74% of the responding schools used both in-school and out-of-school suspensions, 21% used only out-of-school suspensions while 5% only used in-school suspensions as a form of consequences for students who misbehaved.

Results for Research Question 10. (To what extent do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student

discipline believe that suspensions have discouraged unwanted student behavior?)

As shown in Table 15, 88% of respondents indicated that student suspensions discouraged unwanted student behavior while 12% believed that suspensions had little or no effect on student behavior.

Table 14

Types of Suspensions Used

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Both Types of Suspensions	64	74%
Out-of-School Only	18	21%
In-School Only	4	5%

Table 15

Suspensions Discouraged Unwanted Student Behavior

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Yes	67	88%
No Effect	9	12%

Results for Research Question 11. (Who monitors in-school

suspensions in southern Illinois high schools?)

As indicated in Table 16, 36% of the responding schools used a teacher's aide to monitor in school suspensions, 34% indicated that students were monitored by a school administrator, and 30% indicated that the students serving a suspension were monitored by a faculty member.

Table 16

Person Monitoring in School Suspensions

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Teacher's Aide	25	36%
Administrator	24	34%
Faculty Member	21	30%

Results for Research Question 12. (If out-of-school suspensions are given, what percent of parents do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe would issue additional punishment to their children?)

Respondents were asked to indicate what they believed was the percent of parents who would issue additional punishment for those students who had received a suspension. As indicated in Table 17, 48%, of the respondents believed that less than 20% of the

parents would issue additional punishment, 17%, indicated 20%-40% would issue additional punishment, and 12%, indicated that 41%-60% of the parents would issue additional punishment. Twenty-two percent of the respondents indicated that they were not sure what percent of parents would issue additional punishment at home.

Table 17

Percentage of Parents Administrators Believe Would Issue
Additional Punishment

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Below 20%	41	48%
20% - 40%	15	17%
41% - 60%	10	12%
61% - 80%	0	0%
Over 80%	1	1%
Not Sure	19	22%

Results for Research Question 13. (To what extent are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline satisfied with current discipline procedures?)

Administrators responsible for student discipline were also asked if they were satisfied with their school's current discipline

procedures. As indicated in Table 18, 37% of the respondents indicated that they were very satisfied, 60% of the respondents said they were sometimes satisfied, and 3% said they were seldom satisfied.

Results for Research Question 14. (What discipline procedures

Table 18

Extent of Administrator Satisfaction With Their School's Current Discipline Procedures

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Very Satisfied	32	37%
Sometimes Satisfied	52	60%
Seldom Satisfied	2	3%
Never Satisfied	0	0%

other than detentions and suspensions do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe have been successful?)

Other than detentions and suspensions, southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline were asked if any changes had been made in their school's discipline procedures that were successful in discouraging unwanted student behavior.

Respondents were also asked to list those changes. Table 19 indicates that 67% of the schools had established changes, other than detentions and suspensions, in their discipline procedures, while 33% of the respondents had not made any changes in their discipline procedures.

Table 19

Changes In School Discipline Procedures

List of Choices	Number	Percentage
Administrators who made changes	51	67%
Administrators who did not make changes	25	33%

The three most reported changes in school discipline procedures were:

1. Curricula - Some schools had developed more “hands on” curricula for the purpose of increasing student interest.
2. Saturday detentions - Some schools had established the use of Saturday detentions for students who exhibited unwanted behavior.
3. Establishment of point systems - Some schools had established point systems by which students received points each

time they misbehaved. The more serious the offenses, the more points the students were given. A running total was kept for each student. Several minor offenses would now result in a major consequence.

Chapter 5

Summary, Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

There were three purposes of this study. The first purpose was to determine how detentions and suspensions were used to discourage disruptive and unwanted student behavior by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline. A second purpose of the study was to determine the extent of satisfaction of southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline with current discipline procedures being used. The third purpose of the study was to identify discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions that southern Illinois administrators responsible for student discipline perceived as successful in changing unwanted student behavior.

The specific research questions addressed by this study follow:

1. Are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline using detentions as a form of consequences?
2. Who monitors the detentions?
3. When are detentions served and what is the length of time a student must serve?

4. Has the amount of time students serve in detention discouraged unwanted student behavior?
5. Have there been any changes made in detention procedures during the tenures of southern Illinois High school administrators responsible for student discipline?
6. Have the change(s) made in detention procedures made a difference in student behavior as perceived by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline?
7. Are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline using suspensions to discourage unwanted student behavior?
8. What types of suspensions are being used by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline?
9. Do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe that suspensions have discouraged unwanted student behavior?
10. Who monitors in school suspensions in southern Illinois high schools?
11. If out of school suspensions are given, what percent of parents do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe would issue additional punishment to their children?

12. To what extent are southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline satisfied with current discipline procedures?

13. What discipline procedures other than detentions and suspensions do southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline believe have been successful?

Findings

This study was based on data received from a survey of 86 Southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline. The data collected were presented in tables that contained the number and percentage of responses for each survey question.

Part I of the survey asked questions about the demographics of each school and about the administrator responsible for student discipline. Information from this part of the survey indicated that, 56% of the time, the principal was the individual responsible for student discipline. Sixty-four percent of the respondents had five or fewer years of experience as administrators, 73% of respondents were administrators located in a rural school district setting, and 38% of the respondents served in schools with enrollments of under 600 students.

Part II of the survey contained questions about the use of detentions as a form of consequences. Ninety-eight per cent of

survey respondents reported that detentions were used to control unwanted student behavior. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that a teacher was hired or a current staff member was paid extra to supervise detentions.

Sixty-three percent of respondents indicated that detentions were served before or after school. However, 20% of the schools had established a detention period on Saturday morning.

The length of time a student was required to stay when serving a weekday detention, as reported by respondents, varied from 20 minutes to as much as 60 minutes. Fifty-two percent of respondents reported their schools had set 30 minutes as the amount of detention time required. Saturday morning detentions were split into two categories: those requiring students to serve one and a half to two hours and those requiring three and a half to four hours. Fifty-seven percent of the survey respondents indicated that students were required to serve three and a half to four hours in detention on Saturday morning.

Eighty percent of respondents reported that detentions discouraged unwanted behavior. Sixty percent of respondents also indicated that changes in detention procedures had been made during their tenures as administrators.

All respondents indicated that they used suspensions to discourage student behavior. Seventy-four percent of respondents

reported that they used both in-school and out-of-school suspensions. Eighty-eight percent of respondents indicated that suspensions did have a positive effect on discouraging disruptive student behavior.

Thirty-six percent of respondents reported using a teacher's aide to monitor in school suspensions, 34% used a school administrator, and 30% used faculty members.

Sixty percent of respondents indicated they were sometimes satisfied with current discipline procedures, and 37% indicated that they were very satisfied.

Sixty-seven percent of respondents to the survey indicated that their schools had made changes in their discipline procedures for the purpose of discouraging disruptive student behavior. The three most reported changes were:

1. Curricula - Some schools had developed more "hands on" curricula for the purpose of increasing student interest.

2. Saturday detentions - Some schools had established the use of Saturday detentions for students who exhibited unwanted behavior.

3. Establishment of point systems - Some schools established point systems by which students received points each time they misbehaved. The more serious the offenses, the more points the students were given. A running total was kept for each student.

Several minor offenses would result in a major consequence.

Conclusions

Part I of the survey asked questions about the demographics of each school and about the administrator responsible for student discipline. Data collected from this part of the survey indicated that the principal was usually the individual responsible for student discipline. Most administrators had five or fewer years of experience and they were located in a rural setting which contained enrollments of under 600 students.

Part II of the survey contained questions about the use of detentions as a form of consequences. Information from this part of the survey indicated that almost all of the schools used detentions as a consequence for controlling unwanted student behavior. Detentions were supervised by a current staff member who was paid extra or a teacher was hired.

Respondents indicated that detentions were served before or after school. However, some schools had established a Saturday morning detention.

Most schools had established the length of time a student was required to stay when serving a weekday detention as 30 minutes. Those students who were required to stay on Saturday served three and a half to four hours in detention.

Administrators indicated that detentions did discourage

unwanted student behavior. They also indicated that changes in detention procedures had been made during their tenures as administrators and that those changes in detention procedures had made a difference in student behavior.

Part III of the survey contained questions about the use of suspensions as a form of consequences. All of the respondents indicated that suspensions were used to discourage unwanted student behavior. Respondents reported that their school used both in-school and out-of-school suspensions. Data collected also indicated that suspensions did have a positive effect on student behavior.

Schools were evenly divided on who monitored an in-school suspension between a teacher's aide, an administrator, and a faculty member.

Respondents indicated that they were sometimes satisfied or very satisfied with current discipline procedures. Administrators also indicated that they believed very few parents would issue additional punishment at home for behavior problems caused at school.

Part IV of the survey gave respondents the opportunity to list additional information. Administrators indicated that their schools had made changes in their discipline procedures for the purpose of discouraging disruptive student behavior. The three most reported

changes were:

1. Curricula - Some schools had developed more “hands on” curricula for the purpose of increasing student interest.
2. Saturday detentions - Some schools had established the use of Saturday detentions for students who exhibited unwanted behavior.
3. Establishment of point systems - Some schools established point systems by which students received points each time they misbehaved. The more serious the offenses, the more points the students were given. A running total was kept for each student.

Recommendations

High school principals may wish to initiate changes in the discipline of their students to reduce student misbehavior. Among the changes recommended would be the addition of “hands-on” curricula, the implementation of Saturday detention, and the establishment of a point system for misbehavior. Future studies should focus upon the extent to which these alternative methods of disciplining students have positive effects on student discipline.

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1. Do you presently use detentions as a form of consequences?
- ___ yes ___ no (if no please skip to part III)
2. Who monitors the detentions? ___ Teachers do their own
- ___ Teachers rotate ___ A teacher is hired
- ___ School Administrator ___ Teacher's aide
- ___ Other _____

3. When are detentions served and what is the amount of time a student must serve?

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| ___ Before or after school | ___ Minutes |
| ___ Saturday | ___ Minutes/Hours |
| ___ Other _____ | ___ Minutes |

4. Has the amount of time students serve in detention discouraged unwanted behavior?

- ___ yes ___ no effect

5. Have there been changes made in detentions during your time as an administrator?

- ___ yes ___ no (if no, please skip to part III)

If yes, please explain changes: _____

6. Has the change(s) in detention procedures made a difference in student behavior? ___ yes ___ no effect

Part III: Suspensions

1. Do you presently use suspensions to discourage unwanted student behavior? ___ yes ___ no (if no, please skip to part IV)

2. What type of suspensions are used? ___ In school
 ___ Out of school (if out of school only skip to part IV)
 ___ Both (in school and out of school)

3. Have suspensions discouraged unwanted student behavior?

___ yes

___ no effect

4. Who monitors in school suspensions?

___ teacher's aide

___ faculty member

___ administrator

5. If out of school suspensions are given, what percent of the parents do you believe issue additional punishment?

___ below 20%

___ 21%-40%

___ 41%-60%

___ 61%-80%

___ over 80%

___ not sure

Part IV: Additional Information

1. Are you satisfied with your current procedures?

___ very satisfied

___ sometimes satisfied

___ seldom satisfied

___ never satisfied

2. Is there something besides detentions and suspensions that has been successful in changing unwanted student behavior in your school? ___ yes ___ no

If yes, please explain:

Appendix B

Cover Letter

TO: Administrator in Charge of Student Discipline
FROM: Les Oyler, Principal
Coulterville Unit School District #1
RE: Current School Discipline Procedures

I am currently conducting a study of the discipline procedures used by southern Illinois high school administrators responsible for student discipline. The data collected from your response will be used as part of my field study through Eastern Illinois University. I will be gathering information on current methods outlined in the study as well as those unique to your school.

Please complete the enclosed survey and return it in the self addressed stamped envelope by Friday, **March 21,1997**. It should only take 5 to 10 minutes of your time to complete and your response is of great importance to me.

Thank you again for your time and cooperation. If you have any questions about the survey, please feel free to contact me at (618) 758-2338.

Sincerely,

Les Oyler, Principal
Coulterville Unit School District #1
101 W. Grant
Coulterville, Illinois 62237